

MALAYSIAN JOURNAL OF DISTANCE EDUCATION
Jurnal Pendidikan Jarak Jauh Malaysia

This issue covers a wide variety of spectrum from school to university students as well as would be teachers; using blogs and e-books on top of e-learning management system to teach from Science to English subjects; and issues such as academic performance and digital divide in education of students from the rural communities.

In the first article, Aisar Salihu Musa (Kano State Polytechnic, Nigeria) systematically review studies on higher education institution students' perceptions of the usage of blog in English as Second Language (ESL) writing classes. Other than to introduce blog as a medium and create awareness to both educators and students about its application and benefits in today's educational institutions, this article also address the challenges for more effective use of blogs in ESL writing classes.

The second article, by Johan @ Eddy Luaran, Kamarol Baharen Mohd Rom, Fazyudi Ahmad Nadzri (all of Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia) and Jasmine Jain (Taylor's University, Subang Jaya, Malaysia), investigate the preferences of secondary school teachers as well as the impacts and challenges of using e-book in teaching and learning. Despite the vast potential that e-books could offer in leveraging the effectiveness of teaching and learning, low awareness and difficulty in implementation hinder its integration.

In the third article, Margaret J. Suarez (University of the Philippines Open University) and Maria Ana T. Quimbo (University of the Philippines Los Banos) analyse the relationship of selected personal factors (gender, age and study level) and test anxiety (measured using Westside Test Anxiety Scale) with academic performance of undergraduate online learners at the University of the Philippines Open University. Concurrent with the finding which showed that anxiety score has highly significant relationship with academic performance, they put forward some recommendations to help online learners cope with the distance mode of study.

Fourth article by Fatemeh Hemmati and Hamid Mojarrad (both of University of Payame Noor, Tehran, Iran) evaluate on the merits and demerits of the present e-learning system from the viewpoint of teachers and TEFL Masters students at University of Payame Noor, Tehran, Iran. Despite all the drawbacks in the system, both students and teachers still believe that e-learning can potentially be a good substitute for traditional face-to-face learning provided more should be done to improve the overall system.

Fifth article by Amosa Abdulganiyu Alasela, Ogunlade Oyeronke Olufunmilola, Ogunlade Amos Akindele and Obielodan Omotayo Olabo (all of University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Nigeria) examine the usefulness of ICT in enhancing learning among pre-service teachers in the University of Ilorin. Pre-service teachers should be more familiar with best practices, teaching strategies, and classroom application with regards to the application of information and communication technology in teaching-learning process. Therefore, positive perception of pre-service teachers would ultimately affect integration of ICT for learning.

In the final article, Johan @ Eddy Luaran, Fazyudi Ahmad Nadzri, Kamarol Baharen Mohd Rom (all of Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia) and Jasmine Jain (Taylor's University, Subang Jaya, Malaysia) address the existing gap on on ICT integration in education of students from the rural communities, in particular among indigenous students from three districts in Pahang, Malaysia. Despite the positive ICT attitude and the perceived importance of ICT in English learning among the indigenous students, existing low ICT competency calls for ample supports and efforts in improving the indigenous students' ICT competence and further initiatives in enhancing the utilisation of ICT in English classes.

Dr. Radziah Adam
Deputy Chief Editor